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# special libraries

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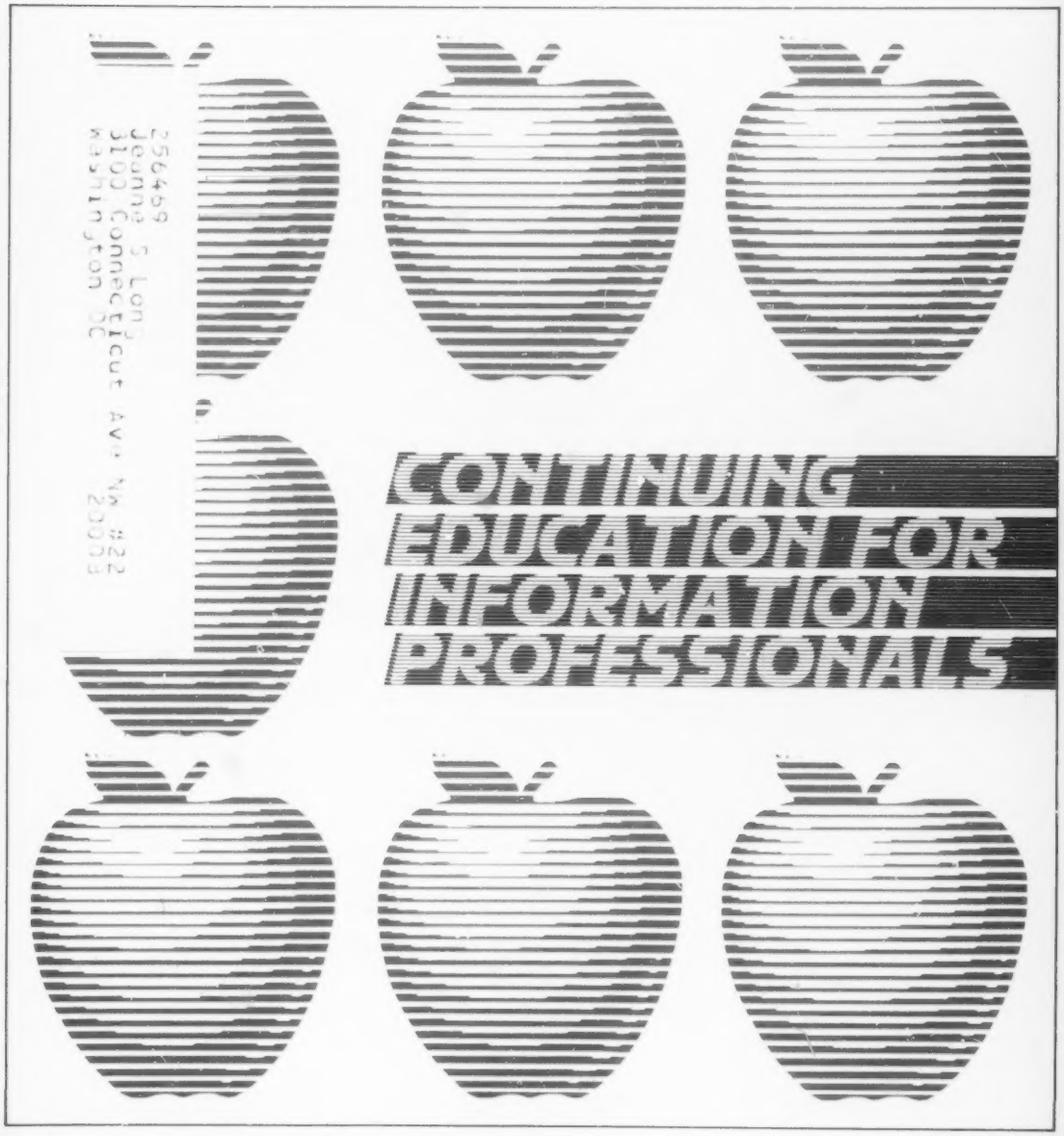

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# 1987 Salary Survey Update

In an effort to assist special librarians in salary negotiations, Special Libraries Association conducts an in-depth salary survey every three years. During intervening years the Association, using a random sampling technique, polls 25% of the membership to provide current salary information. The results present an overview of special librarians' salaries, as well as a measure of annual salary increases since the last survey.

The 1987 data update the overall national and regional salary data reported in the 1985 in-depth *Triennial Salary Survey* report. While not as comprehensive as the 1985 survey report, the 1987 update indicates general national salary trends. Used in conjunction with the 1985 report, the 1987 information provides special librarians with guidelines for salary discussions.

During April–May, 1987, a 25% sample of Members and Associate Members received the survey questionnaire.

| | |
|---|---|
| Questionnaires Mailed | 2,998 |
| Questionnaires Returned | 1,076 |
| Invalid for Computation | 4 |
| Usable Responses | 1,072 (36%) |

Table 1 reports the changes in mean and median salaries from April 1, 1986, to April 1, 1987, within nine U.S. census regions and Canada. The figures illustrate changes in dollar amounts and percentage increase or decrease.

For the overall United States, the 1987 survey data indicate a decrease of 1.6% in mean salaries from $30,180 in 1986 to $29,676 in 1987. During this same period, median salaries dropped 5.6% from $28,800 in 1986 to $27,250 in 1987.

In Canada, median salaries increased 2.5% from $33,180 in 1986 to $34,000 in 1987. Mean salaries decreased slightly from $34,756 in 1986 to $34,453 in 1987, representing a 0.8% change.

**Table 1. 1987 Mean & Median Salaries by Census Region in Rank Order of % Change in Median from 1986 to 1987**

| Census Region | Median 1986 | Median % of increase (or decrease) | Median 1987 | Mean 1986 | Mean % | Mean 1987 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New England | 29,937 | (16.9) | 25,605 | 30,649 | (8.6) | 28,210 |
| West North Central | 30,000 | (14.8) | 26,125 | 30,812 | (13.4) | 27,153 |
| Pacific | 31,000 | (5.6) | 29,340 | 32,519 | (4.6) | 31,060 |
| Middle Atlantic | 31,500 | (5.0) | 30,000 | 33,418 | (6.3) | 31,415 |
| West South Central | 28,371 | (5.0) | 27,000 | 29,240 | (3.2) | 28,327 |
| East South Central | 28,500 | (3.6) | 27,500 | 27,660 | 4.3 | 28,883 |
| South Atlantic | 28,000 | 2.8 | 28,800 | 31,907 | (3.2) | 30,904 |
| Canada* | 33,180 | 2.5 | 34,000 | 34,756 | (0.8) | 34,453 |
| East North Central | 27,500 | (1.8) | 27,000 | 30,033 | (4.2) | 28,818 |
| Mountain | 24,096 | 1.3 | 24,400 | 25,383 | 3.4 | 26,263 |
| Overall United States | 28,800 | (5.6) | 27,250 | 30,180 | (1.6) | 29,676 |

* Salaries reported in Canadian dollars. The exchange rate on April 1, 1986, was approximately Canadian $1.39 = United States $1.00. On April 1, 1987, the rate was Canadian $1.30 = United States $1.00.


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A comparison with past surveys indicates a gradual increase of 4.3% in the mean salary within the United States over the last three years. The mean rose from $28,421 in 1984 to $29,676 in 1987. The median salary increased approximately 1% during this same period, rising from $27,000 in 1984 to $27,250 in 1987.

Canadian survey comparisons indicate an increase of 5.8% in mean salary during the last three years, rising from $32,478 in 1984 to $34,453 in 1987. An 8.4% increase in the median salary occurred, rising from $31,146 in 1984 to $34,000 in 1987.

All U.S. regions sampled, except for the South Atlantic and Mountain regions, experienced a median salary decrease between April 1, 1986, and April 1, 1987. The decrease ranged from 16.9% to 1.8%. The South Atlantic region, which experienced no increase from 1985 to 1986, experienced a 2.8% increase in 1987. The Mountain region, which decreased 6.5% from 1985 to 1986, increased in 1987 by 1.3%.

All areas, except the Mountain and East South Central regions, experienced a decrease in mean salary ranging from 13.4% to 3.2% below 1986 figures. The Mountain region experienced a 3.4% increase in mean salary, while mean salaries in the East South Central region were 4.3% above those reported in 1986.

Table 2 lists the salary distribution in rank order of 1987 median salaries for Canada and nine United States census regions. In comparing rankings with the 1986 salary survey data, the three regions showing the greatest change are the South Atlantic region, which moved up from eight to four; the New England region, which moved down from five to nine; and the West North Central region, which moved down from four to eight. The Middle Atlantic, West South Central, Pacific, and Mountain regions, and Canada, showed no change in rank order. The East South Central region moved up one position while the East North Central moved up three positions.

Table 3 lists salary distribution by four job titles: Manager, Assistant/Section Head, Librarian/Information Specialist, and Support Staff. The data are combined from the nine census regions and Canada.

Manager's salaries ranged from $21,902 to $60,136 with a mean of $36,495. Assistant Section Heads earned from $18,829 to $45,400; the mean was $29,700. Individuals holding the title Librarian/Information Specialist reported salaries ranging from $17,651 to $41,341, with a mean of $27,183. Support staff salaries ranged from $13,194 to $44,611; the mean was $23,300.

A comparison of 1985 salary survey data indicates that median salaries at the managerial level dropped from $34,803 in 1985 to $34,500 in 1987. This represents a 0.87% decrease from April 1, 1985, to April 1, 1987. The mean salary in 1985 was $36,491, at the managerial level. Mean salary for managers on April 1, 1987, was $36,495, showing little change over the two-year period.

The median salary for Assistant/Section Heads decreased from $30,228 in 1985 to $28,500 in 1987—a 6.0% decrease. The corresponding mean salary dropped 4.2% from $30,960 in 1985 to $29,700 in 1987.

Library/Information Specialists' median salary dropped 4.2% from $27,108 in 1985 to

**Table 2. Salary Distribution by Census Region in Rank Order of 1987 Median**

| Census Region | Average Lowest 10% | 25th Percentile | Percentile Median | 75th Percentile | Average Highest 10% | Mean | No Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Canada* | 21,586 | 28,000 | 34,000 | 39,897 | 51,664 | 34,453 | 115 |
| Middle Atlantic | 19,271 | 25,000 | 30,000 | 35,000 | 54,610 | 31,415 | 175 |
| Pacific | 20,667 | 25,920 | 29,340 | 35,000 | 48,785 | 31,060 | 135 |
| South Atlantic | 17,676 | 23,500 | 28,800 | 34,700 | 54,729 | 30,904 | 145 |
| East South Central | 18,586 | 23,325 | 27,500 | 30,120 | 50,941 | 28,883 | 26 |
| East North Central | 17,994 | 22,596 | 27,000 | 33,460 | 46,717 | 28,818 | 169 |
| West South Central | 16,139 | 22,872 | 27,000 | 31,000 | 49,137 | 28,327 | 75 |
| West North Central | 16,417 | 22,000 | 26,125 | 31,000 | 41,923 | 27,153 | 59 |
| New England | 17,262 | 22,300 | 25,605 | 32,000 | 50,829 | 28,210 | 70 |
| Mountain | 16,032 | 21,000 | 24,400 | 31,485 | 39,964 | 26,263 | 44 |
| Overall United States | 19,119 | 23,617 | 27,250 | 33,517 | 49,858 | 29,676 | 898 |

* See Footnote to Table 1.

**Table 3. 1987 Salary Distribution by Job Title, United States & Canada Combined**

| Job Title | Average Lowest 10% | 25th Percentile | Percentile Median | 75th Percentile | Average Highest 10% | Mean | No Respon-dents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Manager | 21,902 | 29,568 | 34,500 | 40,825 | 60,136 | 36,495 | 311 |
| Assistant/Section Head | 18,829 | 24,460 | 28,500 | 34,000 | 45,400 | 29,700 | 110 |
| Librarian/Information Specialist | 17,651 | 22,796 | 26,000 | 30,800 | 41,341 | 27,183 | 587 |
| Support Staff | 13,194 | 18,000 | 21,100 | 23,000 | 44,611 | 23,300 | 25 |

$26,000 in 1987. The mean dropped slightly from $27,544 in 1985 to $27,183 in 1987 representing 1.3% decrease.

The median salary for Support Staff in 1987 was $21,100, a 7.6% increase from the 1985 report of $19,500. Mean salary for support staff increased substantially from $19,325 in 1985 to $23,300 in 1987. This represents a 17% change from April 1, 1985, to April 1, 1987.

The 1987 Salary Survey attempted to determine the number of respondents unemployed during the period of April 1, 1986, to April 1, 1987. Of the 1,072 valid responses, 63 participants (5.9%) indicated unemployment during a portion of this period. Average length of unemployment was five months.